



116
Pow/MIA-Info
LWOS
F(b)(3)

SION 1 OF 2

FE 0000000000

ERIA

PASS:

EXCLUSIVE FOR THE DIRECTOR, WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM;
NSA FOR ZKZK OO ZRL DE (EXCLUSIVE FOR THE DIRECTOR, NSA);
STATE EXCLUSIVE FOR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY, INR; DIA
EXCLUSIVE FOR THE DIRECTOR, DIA (DIA IS AUTHORIZED TO PASS
THIS INFORMATION TO THE JOINT CASUALTY RESOLUTION CENTERS IN
PAGE 2 RUEAIIA 9781 S E C R E T
BANGKOK AND BARBERS POINT, HAWAII, FOR COMMANDERS ONLY).

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WARNING: INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE.
REPORT CLASS ~~S E C R E T~~ --WNINTEL--NOFORN--NOCONTRACT--ORCON
DIST: 12 OCTOBER 1988

EXCLUSIVE DISSEMINATION TO ADDRESSEES LISTED AT END OF REPORT

COUNTRY:

SUBJ:

MIA/POW: COMMENTS BY A SENIOR LAO MINISTRY OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS OFFICIAL ON THE LAO GOVERNMENT'S
HANDLING OF UNITED STATES MISSING IN ACTION AND
PRISONER OF WAR ISSUE

PAGE 3 RUEAIIA 9781 S E C R E T

DOI:

EARLY OCTOBER 1988

SOURCE:

TEXT: 1. ACCORDING TO THE EARLY OCTOBER 1988 COMMENTS OF A SENIOR
LAO MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MFA) OFFICIAL, THERE ARE NO LIVE
U.S. PRISONERS OF WAR (POW) IN LAOS. THE OFFICIAL STATED THAT THE
MISSING IN ACTION (MIA)/POW ISSUE WITHIN THE LAO GOVERNMENT IS THE
SHARED RESPONSIBILITY OF THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE (MND) AND
MINISTRY OF INTERIOR (MOI), WITH THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
(MFA) BECOMING DIRECTLY INVOLVED ONLY WHEN REMAINS ARE FOUND AND ARE
TURNED OVER TO THE U.S. EMBASSY IN VIENTIANE. ACCORDING TO THE
OFFICIAL, BECAUSE OF THE GENERAL MAKE-UP AND OUTLOOK OF THE MND AND
MOI, THE LAO GOVERNMENT APPEARS TO TAKE A RATHER INTRANSIGENT
POSITION WITH THE UNITED STATES OVER SITE INSPECTIONS AND RECOVERING
MIA REMAINS. THE MFA FAVORS A MORE ACCOMMODATING POSITION, BUT THE
MINISTRY'S INFLUENCE IS LIMITED TO PERSUASION BROUGHT TO BEAR BY
FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER ((PHOUN)) SIPASEUT BY VIRTUE OF HIS POSITION
PAGE 4 RUEAIIA 9781 S E C R E T
IN THE POLITICAL BUREAU OF THE LAO PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY PARTY.

2. ACCORDING TO THIS SENIOR MFA OFFICIAL, THE LAO CONDITION
OF "COMPENSATION" IN RETURN FOR INCREASED COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED
STATES IN SITE INSPECTIONS (EXCAVATIONS) AND RECOVERY OF MIA REMAINS
CAN BE SATISFIED THROUGH INCREASED ASSISTANCE SIMILAR TO THAT
CURRENTLY BEING GIVEN BY THE UNITED STATES IN THE FORM OF MEDICAL
CLINICS BEING BUILT IN RURAL AREAS OF LAOS. INDEED, THE OFFICIAL
STATED THESE CLINICS PROVIDE COMPENSATION TO THOSE LAO PEOPLE WHO
SUFFERED MOST FROM U.S. AGGRESSION DURING THE WAR, AND THIS MEDICAL
ASSISTANCE FROM THE UNITED STATES WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN THE LAO

286

GOVERNMENT'S AGREEMENT TO ALLOW THE SITE INSPECTION TEAM TO COME TO LAOS IN EARLY OCTOBER 1988. IN ADDITION TO THE CLINICS, THE OFFICIAL STATED SUCH SUPPORT AS INCREASED AID DONATIONS TO LAOS FROM THE UNITED STATES THROUGH SUCH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AS THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP) AND THE UNITED NATIONS FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO) WOULD ALSO SERVE TO SATISFY THE LAO DEMAND FOR "COMPENSATION."

3. IN DISCUSSING THE DISPOSITION OF MIA REMAINS FOUND IN PAGE 5 RUEAIIA 9781 S E C R E T
LAOS, THE OFFICIAL STATED HE KNEW OF NO LAO GOVERNMENT POLICY TO STORE REMAINS OR ANY INSTANCE WHERE THE LAO GOVERNMENT CURRENTLY, OR THE PATHET LAO PRIOR TO 1975, TURNED OVER MIA REMAINS TO THE NORTH VIETNAMESE.

4. (HEADQUARTERS COMMENT: THE LAO MND MAY BE THE CENTRAL REPOSITORY OF ALL POW/MIA DATA. THE MOI IS INVOLVED IN DECIDING WHEN, WHERE AND WHAT AREAS ARE TO BE SURVEYED AND/OR EXCAVATED. THE MFA NEGOTIATES AND COORDINATES WITH THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY IN VIENTIANE AND OTHER UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS PRIOR TO SURVEYS AND EXCAVATIONS, WITH AN MND REPRESENTATIVE USUALLY BEING PRESENT AT THESE NEGOTIATIONS. DURING AN ACTUAL SURVEY AND SUBSEQUENT EXCAVATION, MND, MFA AND PROBABLY MOI PERSONNEL ARE ALL REPRESENTED ON SITE. THESE MINISTRIES MUST GET PRIOR APPROVAL DIRECTLY FROM THE LAO POLITBURO ON THE POW/MIA ISSUE, AS WELL AS OTHER MATTERS INVOLVING THE UNITED STATES. SOME OF THE ABOVE INFORMATION REGARDING LAO POLICY ON THE POW/MIA ISSUE MAY BE SLIGHTLY DATED, FOR SINCE AUGUST 1987 BOTH SIDES HAVE REACHED A BETTER ACCORD AND PROGRESS HAS RESULTED. IN THE PAST THE LAO MAY HAVE BROUGHT UP "COMPENSATION" AS A STALLING TACTIC, PERHAPS TO GIVE THE LAO

PAGE 6 RUEAIIA 9781 S E C R E T
GOVERNMENT TIME TO GET APPROVAL FROM VIETNAM. DURING 1988 THE LAO SENT MFA OFFICIALS OUT ON THEIR OWN TO SEEK POW/MIA INFORMATION AND TO PREPARE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND VILLAGERS FOR IMPENDING EFFORTS TO FIND SUCH INFORMATION. THE MND HAS ALSO CONDUCTED SOME UNILATERAL EXCAVATIONS OF CRASH SITES. AT PRESENT, THE LAO ARE REQUESTING "HUMANITARIAN AID" RATHER THAN WAR REPARATIONS OR "COMPENSATION", AND THEY WOULD PROBABLY WANT AN OFFICIAL AID PROGRAM ON THE ORDER OF ABOUT ONE MILLION U.S. DOLLARS PER YEAR AT THE OUTSET.)

ACQ: - (EARLY OCTOBER 1988).

DISSEM: FIELD: NONE.

WASHINGTON DISSEM:

TO WHSITRM: EXCLUSIVE FOR THE DIRECTOR, WHITE
HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

TO STATE: EXCLUSIVE FOR THE ASSISTANT
SECRETARY, INR

TO DIA: EXCLUSIVE FOR THE DIRECTOR, DIA

TO NSA: EXCLUSIVE FOR THE DIRECTOR, NSA

BT

#9781

BT

~~S E C R E T~~ SPECAT NOFORN NOCONTRACT ORCON WNINTEL
FINAL SECTION OF 2

CITE

SERIA

PASS: EXCLUSIVE FOR THE DIRECTOR, WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM;

(b)(3)

NSA FOR ZKZK OO ZRL DE (EXCLUSIVE FOR THE DIRECTOR, NSA);
STATE EXCLUSIVE FOR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY, INR; DIA
EXCLUSIVE FOR THE DIRECTOR, DIA (DIA IS AUTHORIZED TO PASS
THIS INFORMATION TO THE JOINT CASUALTY RESOLUTION CENTERS IN
PAGE 2 RUEAIIA 9782 ~~SECRET~~
BANGKOK AND BARBERS POINT, HAWAII, FOR COMMANDERS ONLY).

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WARNING: INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE.
WARNING: REPORT CLASS ~~SECRET~~--WARNING NOTICE INTELLIGENCE
SOURCES OR METHODS INVOLVED--NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS--NOT
RELEASABLE TO CONTRACTORS/CONSULTANTS --DISSEMINATION AND EXTRACTION
OF INFORMATION CONTROLLED BY ORIGINATOR .
DECL: OADR DRV [REDACTED] BY RECORDED REPORTING OFFICER: ALL PORTIONS (b)(3)
CARRY CLASSIFICATION AND CONTROLS OF OVERALL DOCUMENT.
BT
#9782

<SECT>

SECTION: 01 OF 02

<SSN>

9781

<TOR>

881012104421 MSG000213965061

<SECT>

SECTION: 02 OF 02

<SSN>

9782

<TOR>

881012104458 MSG000213965097